

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers

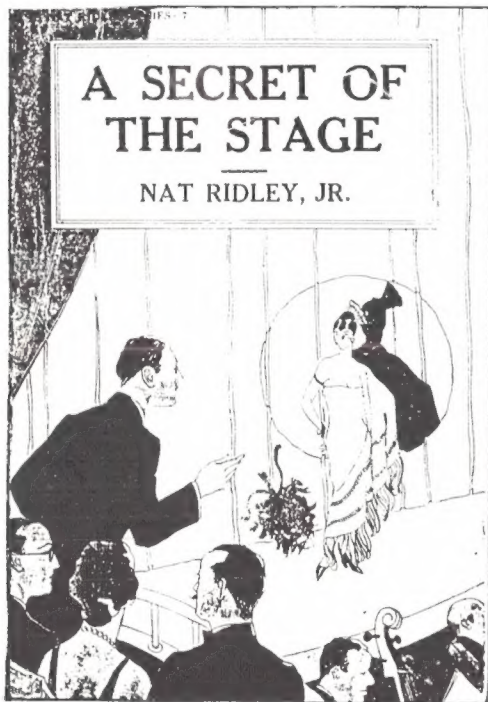
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NICK CARTER, SCHOOLMASTER

By J. Randolph Cox



DIME NOVEL SKETCHES #261

NAT RIDLEY SERIES

Publisher: Garden City Publishing Co., Garden City, NY. Issues: 15. Dates: January 2, 1926, to February 21, 1927. Schedule: Monthly. Size: 7 7/8 x 5 1/8". Pages: 200-225. Price: Not shown (probably 15¢ to 25¢). Illustration: Colored pictorial cover. Contents: Reprint of Stratemeyer stories from *Old Cap Collier Library*.

NICK CARTER, SCHOOLMASTER

By J. Randolph Cox

In January, 1897, Street & Smith added a new title to their list of weekly publications commonly called "dime novels." It was the *New Nick Carter Library*, essentially a continuation of the *Nick Carter Detective Library* which had begun publication in August, 1891. Decked out in colored covers and slightly smaller in format than its black and white covered predecessor it had more pages. A typical issue ran to 32 pages, excluding the covers. Each story, as with the earlier series, was signed "by the Author of 'Nick Carter.'"

Nick Carter himself played only a minor role in the stories in the new series. The leading character was introduced to the readers as Trimble Carter (Trim for short), the son of Chickering Carter, Nick's first assistant. For the next nine months, Trim solved mysteries, captured criminals, and upheld the family name in Alaska, Australia, South Africa, Mexico, and several cities in the United States. Once back in New York, Trim worked on cases with his father and Nick Carter before disappearing from the series completely.

Trim might have left the series sooner, but his last five cases were published in issues alternated with older stories reprinted from the *Nick Carter Library* and thus he remained on hand through the week of September 18, 1897 (and issue #38).

Trim was replaced as an alternative hero to Nick Carter by Dan Lewis, a one-time reporter (his connection with journalism was left somewhat vague) who had enrolled in Nick's school for detectives. Yes, by October, 1897, Nick Carter had decided it was time to retire and train young men to succeed him for the detective profession. He set up his Detective School in his house in New York City and the stories began, at first alternating with more twice-told tales from the *Nick Carter Library*, but soon taking over the entire run of what was by then called the *Nick Carter Weekly*.

By actual count, there are 46 stories that belong to the Detective School Series. A 47th can be included by adding the story in which Nick came out of retirement at last, although the Detective School is not mentioned in it. The stories appeared between October 2, 1897, and August 12, 1899, the last four were published almost a year after the story in which Nick ended his retirement. It forms a curious epilogue to the series in that this final group follows 38 weeks of stories reprinted from the *Nick Carter Library*.

The Trim Carter stories were written by Frederick Russell Burton who had also written most of the stories about Nick's second assistant, Patsy, which alternated with reprinted stories in the latter part of the *Nick Carter Library*. The first of the Detective School Series was written either by Burton or by Ernest Avon Young or both (according to information in the S&S Archives at Syracuse University). Since the second story in the series was written by Burton alone it is possible that Young submitted the first one and Burton was given that manuscript to edit to fit the Nick Carter style. For some reason he elected not to continue the series. The third and all subsequent stories in the Detective School Series were written by Weldon J. Cobb, who contributed more original material to the *Nick Carter Weekly* than any other writer until Frederick Van Rensselaer Day returned to writing the stories in 1904.

The Detective School Series began somewhat hesitatingly with a brief description of Nick's plan and the statement that he, "had carefully chosen the students in the hope of selecting only those who had capacity for becoming good detectives." Much of the action centers on Dan Lewis whom Nick chose to "work up the case." Throughout the story he asks himself what Nick Carter might do under the specific circumstances in which he finds himself. Nick has told him not to depend on his revolver except as a last resort and so there is no gunplay.

Dan's first case involves arson, his second counterfeiting. In fact, many of the later cases taken up by the members of the Detective School involve these particular crimes.

By the third case, Dan is no longer with the Detective School. No explanation is given and the character bears a different name when the stories were collected in the *Magnet Library* edition. Perhaps it's just as well. Dan Lewis, as described by Burton and Young, was a little too forceful and imaginative a character and the school was too limiting an arena for him.

In the third story Phil Marcy is introduced as the boy detective and is referred to as "Nick Carter's Cleverest Protege." Obviously the work of a different writer than the first two, the story is also much better written. The characters are more sharply delineated and behave like real boys might. The descriptive passages are longer and give much needed information, not just static accounts of how the boys shadow suspects. There is little of the traditional dime novel dialogue made up of one-liners.

A rivalry is established among the students at the Detective School and one of the most interesting characters is Burt Newton, bank clerk turned boy detective who is forever bragging about his own theories and achievements. The detective makes mistakes and there are some genuine surprises in the story. We also learn Nick Carter's "seventh rule" (but not the total number in the list): "Never recognize an associate when in action."

The fourth story, THE GOLD WIZARD; OR, NICK CARTER'S CLEVER PROTEGE, introduces a new team of boys: Brock Walters, whose specialty is physiognomy, and Don Ford, a young athlete whose dog, Gyp, helps solve the case. The villain bears the distinctive name of Croesus J. Dunbar and the crime is the old gold brick swindle.

In NICK CARTER'S NEWSBOY FRIEND; OR, THE GREAT SANDOVAL MYSTERY, the title character is Tom Dawson who expresses what most readers felt when he says that he'd, "rather be [Nick Carter] than President of the United States."

In NICK CARTER'S YOUNGEST DETECTIVE; OR, WORKING ON HIS OWN CASE, the setting is Chicago where the stories will be set for the next four weeks. From what little is known of the author, Weldon J. Cobb, this would seem appropriate since he was a Chicago journalist. It is in this story that Bob Ferret is introduced along with Jack Burton and Aleck White and the pattern for the rest of the Detective School series is given more definite shape.

When these stories were collected and reprinted in the *Magnet Detective Library* the individual boy detective protagonists who preceded Mr. Ferret were renamed "Bob Ferret" to match the name of the character who became the most frequently recurring boy detective character in the *Nick Carter Weekly*. In that, he was like Raymond Chandler's detectives who were always named Philip Marlowe in the books, no matter what names they bore in the original magazine stories.

Within the next few weeks, the six boys who made up the core of recurring characters were introduced.

Besides BOB FERRET who was the youngest but who "had often exhibited a mature grasp of facts, an energy and intuition that fairly astounded even [Nick Carter] himself," (NCW 50, p. 14) there are:

JACK BURTON, "an all-around amateur athlete, [who] relied on good stout fists when his wits failed, assumed instantly the pose of a gladiator ready to jump into the arena,"

ALECK WHITE, "slow, thoughtful [and] meditative. Discipline was his strong point, and he stood like a soldier awaiting orders,"

LARRY MOORE, "the mascot and hoodoo of the school combined, because [he was] always blundering at the wrong time and yet invariably coming out right side up through some extraordinary luck,"

BUFF HUTCHINSON, "ex-king of the newsboys, acrobatic rough-and-tumble marvel, with wits sharp as a razor, eyes like an eagle, a heart that absolutely knew no fear—to whom Nick Carter was a hero, and detective service the highest attainable honor," and

PAUL ELLIOTT, not a student in the Detective School but a constant visitor ever since Bob Ferret saved his life in Chicago. He was eventually replaced by an addition to the group who was perhaps the most unpredictable, but certainly the liveliest,

ROXY THE FLOWER GIRL, who was brave, plucky, bright as a dollar, and the favorite of all the boys. When Jack Burton met her she was living with her aunt and her alcoholic uncle who depended on what she made selling flowers to supplement his drinking allowance. An accomplished acrobat, she had learned the trick of sliding along a wire by means of the trapeze-artist's mouthpiece and hook. "Self-reliant, proud, industrious" she is described as a "trim, demure girl" whose eyes alone give her away beneath the deepest disguise. One of her young colleagues declared once that "she had more than the average amount of dynamite and chain lightning in her makeup." Roxy is "the bright, particular star of Nick Carter's galaxy."

The players were shuffled about and one week Bob Ferret would be the hero, the next Jack Burton, the next it would be Roxy. The stories, as dime novel stories go, are an uneven lot. At worst they contain some of the most implausible situations told in a kind of prose that struggles to be better than the average and too often fails. At best they sparkle with imagination and wit, containing some of the most riveting opening scenes in the dime novel field.

Walking down the street, Bob Ferret narrowly misses being hit by a desk drawer thrown from a second floor window.

A human head is seen moving on its own along the ground.

A man standing on a city street, clad in a military cloak, cries out, "Murder!"

While Nick Carter himself plays only a secondary role in the stories his presence is felt strongly enough. If he isn't turning over the new case to students in the Detective School he is deep in consultation with his young proteges, advising them, discussing the points of the case, or advising in absentia as one student or another asks, "What would Nick Carter do if he were in my shoes?" It seems like a very active retirement.

With the 30th story there was a change in the situation at Nick Carter's Detective School. The trail of mystery led to Riverdale Academy, a boarding-school outside of New York City. Bob Ferret, Jack Burton, Buff Hutchinson enrolled, taking the guise of yet another kind of student. For eleven weeks the *Nick Carter Weekly* printed school stories of a different nature than the Detective School stories. Here will be found adventures of young people at school to parallel those of FRANK MERRIWELL at Fardale in *Tip Top Weekly* or Phil Rushington in the pages of *Do and Dare*. Never mind that the reader is constantly reminded that Bob, Jack, and Buff are

only posing as school boys. These are real school stories, real adventures set at a school.

Two or three weeks later Nick came out of retirement in NICK CARTER IN HARNESS; OR, THE STOLEN SAFE COMBINATION, with no mention of Bob ferret & Co. About a year after that there were four stories about Bob, Jack, Buff and Roxy in Washington, D.C. There was no suggestion that these were stories that should have been told before Nick Carter was back in harness or how else they fit with the chronology of the earlier Detective School stories.

As interesting and entertaining as these stories are their presence in the Nick Carter series raises some questions. Why was Nick Carter given so few new never-before published cases in the first three years of this *Weekly*? Why was there such an emphasis on juvenile detectives?

One possible answer lies in what else Street & Smith were publishing in the nickel weeklies between 1897 and 1899. *Diamond Dick, Jr.*, *Army and Navy Weekly*, the *Old Log Cabin* (as the *Log Cabin Library* was called in its last numbers), *Red, White and Blue*, and the *Tip Top Weekly*. These were later joined by *True Blue*, *Klondike Kit Library*, *The Half-Holiday*, and *The Starry Flag Weekly*. The heroes in most of these were boys. Only western adventurer Gentleman Joe in the *Old Log Cabin* was an adult hero. The most popular weekly was *Tip Top* with the stories of FRANK MERRIWELL. Is this why Nick Carter was allowed to step aside in favor of the young detectives of his famous school?

Another possibility may lie in the authorship of the new stories in the *Nick Carter Weekly*. Frederic Van Rensselaer Dey's last original Nick Carter story, A CRIME BY TELEPHONE; OR, IN TWO PLACES AT ONE TIME, *Nick Carter Library*, #190, March 23, 1895. Was there some reason why he could not be replaced as the major writer on the series? We don't know what agreement was made at that lunch in 1891 when Dey was hired to write the new series.

We aren't even certain about the reasons for his leaving the writing of the stories to others for the weeklies at this particular time. He wrote eight Nick Carter serial for *Street & Smith's New York Weekly* from 1892 to 1894 and another dozen from 1901 to the date in 1904 when he resumed full time writing for the *Nick Carter Weekly*. There were no new Nick Carter serials in the *New York Weekly* during the period when juvenile detectives ruled in the *Nick Carter Weekly*. Therefore, Dey was not contributing anything to the Nick Carter series until after the Detective School series had ended.

Between 1897 and 1904, few of the reprinted Nick Carter stories in the *Nick Carter Weekly* are the work of Dey. Of the 371 numbers during that period, only 26 were by Dey. Whatever the reason, other authors were responsible for writing the Nick Carter stories at this time. Weldon J. Cobb, who has been identified as the author of most of the Detective School stories, was a former Chicago journalist and real-estate dealer who wrote for many of the Street & Smith publications, and for Norman L. Munro's *Golden Hours*. He also wrote one story for Beadle & Adams, three detective stories for the *American Library*, and about twenty stories in the *Nickel Library*. He was writing as early as 1866 and as late as 1899. Following the Detective School stories he contributed many bona fide adult Nick Carter adventures for the publication. Much of what was published over his name after 1899 was reprinted from earlier publications. What little we know of his life is found in Albert Johannsen's *House of Beadle & Adams* (1950).

The experiment with juvenile detectives does not seem to have been an unqualified success since the number of titles would have sustained the

Nick Carter Weekly for less than a year and nearly half of them were never reprinted, either in the later numbers of the *Weekly* or in the *Magnet Library*.

Perhaps we split hairs over this. Does the answer lie in the fact that Burton and Cobb were better at writing stories with juvenile heroes than they were at writing stories with adult heroes? Is the answer something as simple as that?

Checklist of Detective School Series

Nick Carter Weekly

40. (Ernest Avon Young; Frederick Russell Burton) NICK CARTER'S DETECTIVE SCHOOL; OR, THE YOUNG REPORTER'S FIRST CASE. October 2, 1897. (108 ML; 998 NML)
42. (Frederick Russell Burton) NICK CARTER'S BRIGHTEST PUPIL; OR, THE GREAT COUNTERFEITING CASE. October 16, 1897. (114 ML; 1000 NML)
44. (Weldon J. Cobb) NICK CARTER'S MAGIC HAND; OR, THE CRIME OF THE CHINESE HIGHBINDERS. October 30, 1897. (108 ML; 998 NML)
46. (Weldon J. Cobb) THE GOLD WIZARD; OR, NICK CARTER'S CLEVER PROTEGE. November 13, 1897. (108 ML; 998 NML)
48. (Weldon J. Cobb) NICK CARTER'S NEWSBOY FRIEND; OR, THE GREAT SANDOVAL MYSTERY. November 27, 1897. (222 NCW; 328 ML; 1155 NML)
50. (Weldon J. Cobb) NICK CARTER'S YOUNGEST DETECTIVE; OR, WORKING ON HIS OWN CASE. December 11, 1897. (114 ML; 1000 NML)
51. (Weldon J. Cobb) NICK CARTER'S SECOND EDITION; OR, THE MAN WHO VANISHED. December 18, 1897. (114 ML; 1000 NML)
52. (Weldon J. Cobb) WORKING IN THE DARK; OR, A NOVICE THAT LENDS A HAND. December 25, 1897. (223 NCW)
53. (Weldon J. Cobb) A HIDDEN CLUE; OR, THE MYSTERY OF THE BLACK SACK. January 1, 1898. (120 ML; 984 NML)
54. (Weldon J. Cobb) A YOUNG DETECTIVE'S AIR ROUTE; OR, THE GREAT HINDOO MYSTERY. January 8, 1898. (224 NCW)
55. (Weldon J. Cobb) NICK CARTER'S MISSING DETECTIVE; OR, A WARNING BY TELEPHONE. January 15, 1898. (120 ML; 984 NML)
56. (Weldon J. Cobb) NICK CARTER'S GIRL DETECTIVE; OR, WHAT BECAME OF THE CROWN JEWELS. January 22, 1898. (132 ML; 1179 NML)
57. (Weldon J. Cobb) DONE WITH A CLICK; OR, THE MYSTERY OF THE PAINTED ARM. January 29, 1897. (225 NCW; 207 ML; 1201 NML)
58. (Weldon J. Cobb) THE UNSEEN EYE; OR, THE GIRL DETECTIVE'S CRACK CASE. February 5, 1898. (132 ML; 1179 NML)
59. (Weldon J. Cobb) A MESSAGE OF FIRE; OR, WHAT WAS DONE WITH THE MAGNET. February 12, 1898. (120 ML; 984 NML)
60. (Weldon J. Cobb) THE ELECTRIC GIRL; OR, THE FIGURES ON THE TOY BALLOON. February 19, 1898. (132 ML; 1179 NML)
61. (Weldon J. Cobb) NICK CARTER'S JUNIOR FORCE; OR, THE MAN WITH FOUR ARMS. February 26, 1898. (226 NCW; 207 ML; 1201 NML)
62. (Weldon J. Cobb) THE TIN FOIL CLUE; OR, TOLD BY THE PHONOGRAPH. March 5, 1898. (138 ML; 1187 NML)

63. (Weldon J. Cobb) NICK CARTER'S STRONGEST TEAM; OR, THE GLASS FACE OF A COFFIN. March 12, 1898. (138 ML; 1187 NML)
64. (Weldon J. Cobb) A FIGHT FOR A BOOT HEEL; OR, THE NEW MEMBER OF THE READY HANDLERS. March 19, 1898. (138 ML; 1187 NML)
65. (Weldon J. Cobb) CAUGHT BY THE LIGHTNING MAIL; OR, BOB FERRET'S ALLIANCE WITH A PERUVIAN MESMERIST. March 26, 1898. (227 NCW)
66. (Weldon J. Cobb) FIGHTING ELECTRIC FIENDS; OR BOB FERRET AMONG THE WIRE TAPPERS. April 2, 1898. (213 ML; 1210 NML)
67. (Weldon J. Cobb) MONEY TO BURN; OR, HANDLING A MILLION DOLLAR CASE. April 9, 1898. (350 ML; 1127 NML)
68. (Weldon J. Cobb) THE MASK OF GLASS; OR, LITTLE ROXY IN A DOUBLE ROLE. April 16, 1898. (162 ML; 1178 NML)
69. (Weldon J. Cobb) THE MAN FROM TEXAS; OR, BOB FERRET AND JACK BURTON IN DOUBLE HARNESS. April 23, 1898. (162 ML; 1178 NML)
70. (Weldon J. Cobb) SHADOWING A SHADOW; OR, A GHOST IN NICK CARTER'S DETECTIVE SCHOOL. April 30, 1898. (162 ML; 1178 NML)
71. (Weldon J. Cobb) GREEN GOODS; OR, A CATCH IN BOB FERRET'S RAT TRAP. May 7, 1898. (168 ML; 1032 NML)
72. (Weldon J. Cobb) BOB FERRET'S PASSWORD; OR, THE CHASE OF THE GOLD SHIP. May 14, 1898. (207 ML; 1201 NML)
73. (Weldon J. Cobb) ROXY'S GOLDEN DECOY; OR, THE GIRL DETECTIVE PLAYS A LONE HAND. May 21, 1898.
74. (Weldon J. Cobb) THE GREAT DETECTIVE TRIO; OR, NICK CARTER'S BOYS IN A NEW SCHOOL. May 28, 1898. (350 ML; 1127 NML)
75. (Weldon J. Cobb) THE HUMAN FLY; OR, ROXY'S MESSAGE TO THE WIDE AWAKE SCHOOL BOYS. June 4, 1898.
76. (Weldon J. Cobb) BOB FERRET'S TROLLEY TRAIL; OR, THE SCHOOL DETECTIVE'S PATCHED-UP QUARRY. June 11, 1898.
77. (Weldon J. Cobb) ROXY'S "TALKING CLEW"; OR, THE MYSTERY OF THE MAGIC MAZE. June 18, 1898.
78. (Weldon J. Cobb) THE LIVING TARGET; OR, JACK BURTON'S FRIEND FOR LIFE. June 25, 1898.
79. (Weldon J. Cobb) BUFF'S SLIDE FOR LIFE; OR, THE MAN WHO PLANTED MONEY. July 2, 1898.
80. (Weldon J. Cobb) ON THE BACK OF A TURTLE; OR, BOB FERRET AND THE "BIG MITT" MAN. July 9, 1898.
81. (Weldon J. Cobb) THE SILVER-PLATED MAN; OR, THE YOUNG TRAMP DETECTIVE. July 16, 1898.
82. (Weldon J. Cobb) ROXY'S MID-AIR RESCUE; OR, A DIAMOND MINE IN A MUM-MY'S HEAD. July 23, 1898.
83. (Weldon J. Cobb) TRUSTY NO. 333; OR, THE FACE ON THE PRISON CELL WALL. July 30, 1898.
84. (Weldon J. Cobb) THE SKELETON HAND; OR, THE DUMB SHADOWS OF NICK CARTER'S DETECTIVE SCHOOL. August 6, 1898.
86. (Weldon J. Cobb) POSTMAN NO. 45; OR, NICK CARTER'S PUPILS AFTER THE POSTOFFICE ROBBERS. August 20, 1898.

- 88. (Weldon J. Cobb) BOB FERRET'S GOVERNMENT MESSAGE; OR, THE KING SPY OF THE OUTFIT. September 3, 1898.
- 91. (Weldon J. Cobb) NICK CARTER IN HARNESS; OR, THE STOLEN SAFE COMBINATION. September 24, 1898.
- 130. (Weldon J. Cobb) ROXY'S SIGNAL IN THE SKY; OR, A GOLD BUG WORTH A FORTUNE. June 24, 1899.
- 132. (Weldon J. Cobb) THE FACE IN THE BOTTLE; OR, DETECTIVE BUFF AND ONE OF THE FINEST. July 8, 1899. (220 ML)
- 134. (Weldon J. Cobb) THE MALAY'S CHARGE; OR, ROXY'S LIFE SAVED BY A NEW PET. July 22, 1899. (220 ML)
- 137. (Weldon J. Cobb) BOB FERRET'S TRUMP CARD; OR, WHAT WAS FOUND ON A CENTURY RUN. August 12, 1899. (220 ML)

Magnet/New Magnet Libraries

[Since most readers may have more ready access to these over the original weekly novelettes, this list may be useful, even though many of the original stories were not collected in the ML/NML]

- ML 108. (Burton & Cobb) NICK CARTER'S CLEVER PROTEGE; OR, THE MAKING OF A DETECTIVE. September 20, 1899. (40, 46, 44 NCW; 998 NML)
 - ML 114. (Burton & Cobb) THE MAN WHO VANISHED. November 1, 1899. (42, 50, 51 NCW; 1000 NML)
 - ML 120. (Cobb) THE TWELVE TIN BOXES; OR, BOB FERRET'S CHICAGO TANGLE. December 13, 1899. (53, 55, 59 NCW; 984 NML)
 - ML 132. (Cobb) NICK CARTER'S GIRL DETECTIVE; OR, ROXY'S GREAT TRIUMPH. March 7, 1900. (56, 58, 60 NCW; 1179 NML)
 - ML 138. (Cobb) CROSSED WIRES. April 18, 1900. (64, 62, 63 NCW; 1187 NML)
 - ML 162. (Cobb) NICK CARTER'S STAR PUPIL; OR, "ROXY" AND BOB FERRET AFTER BIG GAME. October 3, 1900. (68, 69, 70 NCW; 1178 NML)
 - ML 168. (Stratemeyer & Cobb) BROUGHT TO BAY. November 14, 1900. (77, 79 NCL; 71 NCW; 1032 NML)
 - ML 207. (Cobb) THE BLOW OF A HAMMER AND OTHER STORIES. August 14, 1901. (57, 72, 61 NCL; 225, 226 NCW; 1201 NML)
 - ML 213. (Sawyer, Tozer, Cobb) MILLIONS AT STAKE AND OTHER STORIES. September 25, 1901. (50, 56 NCL; 45, 43, 66 NCW; 1210 NML)
 - ML 220. (Cobb) THE DUMB WITNESS AND OTHER STORIES. December 4, 1901. (137, 132, 134 NCW)
 - ML 328. (Cobb & Caylor) A DETECTIVE'S THEORY. February 17, 1904. (165, 163 NCL; 48, 222, 193, 188 NCW; 1155 NML)
 - ML 350. (Cobb) PLAYING A LONE HAND. July 20, 1904. (67, 74 NCW; 1127 NML)
- [Presented at the Annual Convention of the Popular Culture Association and American Culture Association, Louisville, KY, March 18-21, 1992.]

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LIMITED EDITIONS OF HORATIO ALGER'S RAREST BOOKS. SEND SASE FOR LIST.
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PLAYFUL ANDREW

By Rocco Musemeche

How would you cope with an emergency situation threatening your diligently pursued collection of books and pulp magazines, an accumulation seriously maintained for many years?

Fire, flood or irate household member could also threaten, however in this particular situation on Tuesday, August 25, 1992, it was a hurricane boiling up the Gulf of Mexico after traversing the warm waters of the Atlantic Ocean and exploding across South Florida. It was given the name Andrew, but for real it was a massive storm spawned somewhere off the coast of Africa and developing from a soft murmur to a roaring 165 mph behemoth labeled the Storm of the Century by the Weather Service people.

Confronted by this approaching destructive force, my thoughts went to protecting my collection. Once past the sway of panic, humor presented itself and a resolve to harbor the rare privilege of protecting Tarzan, Don Sturdy and Tom Swift became paramount.

Too many trees near our house presented the dreaded prospect that winds could send one or more smashing into the room where my books were stored on shelves, bookcases or in boxes. Anyone entering this room faced a brilliant display of dust-jacketed copies gained, as most collectors well know, through years of search, probe and dickering. And proud money in some instances, is this not a fact? It's all done in fun, strangely enough.

The titles leaping out makes for drooling to the bona fide collector or book lover, featuring the antics of such heroes as Tom Swift, Don Sturdy, Jerry Todd and Poppy Ott. These are in dust-jackets, the majority of these covers richly done by the one and only Walter Rogers. Many came as unexpected goodies, the procurement of hard to find treasure, all of them objects of hectic pursuit and satisfaction beyond belief.

Wife Doris had trouble getting a hotel or motel. All were filled on the road to Dallas, but flee we must and I was to select a couple of boxes filled with the books I most favored, the ones I wanted to keep away from Andrew's damaging winds and water. It took a while but the Comfort Inn, Longview, Texas, had a room available to accommodate us and Rusty, our sweet little dachshund, and it included breakfast (a marvelous surprise since they served the finest sunny-side-up eggs ever) plus a special discount. These come-ons made up our minds to head for Texas.

A second hard look at my collection, mixed emotions of anguish and sadness. The knowledge I might never see some of these favorites again prompted gnawing my knuckles in frustration. Slowly there seeped in an awareness of fear which in turn set off a longing for the better days I did not appreciate at the time. Thoughts went awry to the Gulf of Mexico where years ago treasure galleons were sent to the bottom by pirates and now another pillager named Andrew scoured the same waters for an eventual downfall to scuttle my treasure.

The task of sorting out what to take along on a hurried decision almost bordered on a mild hatred for my books and a fever took hold to just snatch at random. So under duress, panic and hurry I plucked with cool precision the set of autographed books by Theodore Roscoe and those of Edison Marshall and F. Van Wyck Mason; the dust-jacketed sets of Jerry Todd and Poppy Ott, Don Sturdy and Tom Swift. With a few tears and hefty prayers left behind were sets by Frank L. Packard, George F. Worts and Edgar Rice Burroughs. Ah yes, I did bring along a recently purchased beautiful copy of a book produced by Darrell C. Richardson on the illustrations of J. Allen St. John.

So we took off for dry and windless Texas, and those sunny-side-up eggs, with some regrets over not thinking then of shipping the lot of the collection to Fort Knox.

With Andrew exhausting his fury, we returned a day later to find our hometown of New Iberia, Louisiana, a tangle of debris, of power lines and blasted trees, of damaged homes and shorn roof-tops. I mentally pushed the car onward as we approached the house. Trying to hurry along but to what, finding the books you love soggy with rains, or scattered among the debris in the yard of the neighbor across the street? I went into a nail-biting spree when we stopped before our house and our own debris heaped front yard. It was a mess of tree limbs and ten million leaves. Looking upward brought the first qualm of dread for the two large live oak trees were shredded. I could see sky where once huge limbs shrouded the sun. Wow, what will the room I kept my books look like.

We gingerly entered to find the parlor in great shape, likewise the kitchen, though a power outage existed (the one thing that irks me about hurricanes). We lost everything in the frozen food category. Now for the library and how I hated to turn the doorknob and open the door. Give a description on how THAT felt? Pretty much like reading the numbers of a lottery ticket and knowing the first numbers are OK and you await the rest.

Relief should be spelled differently although the definition in the dictionary is accurate enough. The first object my eyes went to were not to books but to that etching of friend and favorite author Theodore Roscoe which occupies a space above my desk alongside the French Foreign Legion campaign cap Ted picked up somewhere in the Sahara Desert and gifted me with several years ago. A ponderous sigh for this was an item I worried most about while on exodus.

Feverish at first were the examination of each bookshelf and by the time I went over to boxes it was much like a mantle of luck had settled over my feelings.

Over there were my Ted Scotts, The Motor Boys, Otis Adelbert Kline collection, and how was it that I did not think of taking these along? Wow! Over in the corner, high and dry is the collection of Leonard Nason, Lowell Thomas and Percival Christopher Wren. Names and more names of writers sped by my hurried inspection. Mark Twain, James Oliver Curwood, Booth Tarkington, Lawrence Schoonover, John Myers Myers, the speeches of Winston Churchill, Abraham Lincoln, the history of Speke of Stanley and Livingston, the Creation of the World, the Story of the Nile, the Amazon, the Adventures of Br'er Rabbit, Sinbad, Alladin, and a book given me by the mother of a little girl who died from typhoid fever so many long years ago, one of the last she ever read.

That infinite source of goodness who looks after and provides us with our needs and wants was to whom I directed my prayers for the next few minutes. I was home with my books again. Trees I could plant again. Ruined fences and damaged roof would be looked after, but there could hardly be a replacement for books that were your companions for so many years. Oh yes, book dealers galore could look after your wants...maybe. But it would not be the same. It was good to be back to such friends. To friends like Don Sturdy who in the dark hours of night could be heard to argue with the Rover Boys, Tom Swift to harangue with Dave Dashaway.

And, it was so good to once again experience the thrill of opening a package that arrived while we were gone. It contained the very first of a new collection just starting up, that of the Alger series.

Ah, Andrew, playful Andrew. One hundred sixty-five miles per hour playful!

ANDREW AND HIS AFTERMATH

By Gilbert K. Westgard II

While typesetting Rocco Musemeche's "Playful Andrew," I recalled my own experiences with this windy and rainy monster that visited destruction on southern Florida on August 24, 1992, one day prior to its final coming ashore in Louisiana. The only preparation I undertook to protect life and property was to lower and bolt down the hinged aluminum awnings on my house and that of my father.

As the storm approached the coast the television stations showed a radar image of Andrew and gave advice on how to protect yourself in the safest portions of your house. Those in mobile homes and costal condos were advised to head for community shelters.

I watched a broadcast from Miami until the local electricity went down at 4:20 a.m. Then in the remaining hours of darkness I remained in bed listening to the howling and whining of the wind. Dawn revealed that Boynton Beach had hardly any damage beyond a few broken tree limbs. Our power was restored about eight hours after it failed. Meanwhile, we had been kept well informed by listening to a battery-powered radio.

Andrew had been little more than a nuisance in my community, while just a hundred miles to the south the extent of the devastation was hard to believe.

Three days after the storm I drove a van full of food and emergency supplies to Florida City, one of the worst hit areas. This material was collected by students at Palm Beach Community College, where I work in the science department.

It was a six and a half hour round trip of just a little more than 200 miles. I jotted down a few impressions of what I saw:

August 27—bent, broken and uprooted trees—downed cyclone fences—houses and stores with minor damage—roofs without shingles and tiles—exposed rafters and tilted trusses—some neighborhoods remained intact by virtue of having been built stronger than required by the building codes—this is certain to result in a tighter code—a tree-farm with all the palms laying down to form a mat—messages spray-painted on fences and on houses: "Grandma Nelson OK. Call Ed." "Allstate Insurance #-----."—no leaves on trees in the worst hit areas, just trunks and main branches—high voltage lines tangled and down amid tilted and broken transmission towers—fire and police convoys with red and blue flashing lights—a Fish & Wildlife convoy with flashing green lights—aluminium siding ripped from mobile homes and wrapped tightly around trees and posts—traffic heavier on return—no highway lighting until I got back to I-95, just to the north of Miami—metal light poles snapped off and being trucked away on open bed freight trucks (I wonder if this was official salvage, or an overly enterprising fellow who recognized the chance to snatch a load of aluminium scrap)—the way ice was in demand by survivors.

Much has been printed and broadcast about Hurricane Andrew. If you'd like to own an excellent videotape of what it was like in the south Florida area, I highly recommend, "Hurricane Andrew As It Happened." For more information, call 1-305-441-5001. All proceeds directly benefit "We Will Rebuild," a non-profit group supporting victims of Hurricane Andrew.

* * * * *

WANTED TO BUY: GLEASON'S LITERARY COMPANION, VOLUME V, (1864)

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EDWARD S. ELLIS'S NOVELS OF THE GREAT SIOUX UPRISING OF 1862: THE EFFECT OF SETTING ON THE CHARACTERIZATION OF INDIANS

By Randall C. Davis
Jacksonville State University

Scholars of the dime novel have frequently emphasized its status as fantasy. Henry Nash Smith characterizes the dime novel as "an objectified fantasy" (10). Daniel James notes that dime novelists tended to (skirt) the "frontier" (10). In the frontier, the novelists found a "utopian future of comfort, happiness, and equality" (10). These generalizations accurately describe many of the frontier and western dime novels of the mid-nineteenth century; yet not all dime novels of the period simply ignore or gloss over the realities of intercultural contact along the border. In two unusual novels from 1864, Edward S. Ellis directly addresses contemporary relations between Native Americans and Euramericans in the wake of the 1862 "Great Sioux Uprising." The novels, "The Last of the Mohicans" and "The Pathfinder," are noteworthy for their direct engagement with the historical events of the 1862 uprising.

Edward Sylvester Ellis was one of the most prolific and popular writers for Beadle & Adams; his first novel for the firm, *SETH JONES*, published in 1861, was a success. Between 1861 and 1865, Ellis wrote over fifteen titles for the original Beadle Dime Novel series; in his 1864 *North American Review* article on the popular series, hailed as a remarkable innovation in the American publishing industry, William Everett noted that "Mr. Ellis's novels are favorites, and deserve to be" (308).

Most of Ellis's early novels for Beadle & Adams are patently derived from previous texts, especially the frontier romances of the earlier nineteenth century popularized by writers such as James Fenimore Cooper and Robert Montgomery Bird. (I borrow the term "frontier romance" from Henry Nash Smith, *American Frontier*, 1921). Ellis's early novels, like Cooper's, are usually situated on a contested border—tales of the late eighteenth century often taking place in the Ohio Valley, stories of the early nineteenth century often set along the Oregon Trail. As for plot, Ellis heavily exploits Cooper's captivity narrative paradigm (which itself had been derived in part from captivity narratives from the seventeenth through the early nineteenth centuries). Virtually all of Ellis's dime novels focus on white heroes seeking to rescue white women who have been captured by "savage Indians." Indeed, Ellis is so faithful to Cooper's plots that in one of his novels, he even cribs the improbable device (used in both *THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS* and *THE PATHFINDER*) of a British officer accompanied by his pretty daughter on the war-torn frontier; when the daughter is captured, the British officer, "How in the name of common sense did [General Montvere] come to have that gal with the name of [the daughter]?" (36) and we hear no more about it.

While the plots of most of Ellis's early Beadle dime novels are similar to Cooper's frontier romances, the tones of the two genres are markedly different. Cooper's frontier romances are most noted today for their explicit political and social commentary on the American frontier. Ellis's frontier romances, on the other hand, are more concerned with the

as a vehicle for social criticism as he does a protagonist for adventure stories set in the American wilderness. Like most of his fellow dime novelists, Ellis, however, indulges in little such speculation in the majority of his dime novels. Paring down the frontier romance to fit into the uniform 100 pages of the Beadle dime novel format, Ellis focuses almost exclusively on creating an adventure filled plot with minimal overt consideration of the political or social meanings of the actions of his characters.

Consequently, many of the Indian characters in Ellis's early dime novels are unequivocal villains whose apparent sole function is to provide a white protagonist opportunity for display of heroics. On the whole, Ellis provides little consideration of (or even curiosity about) the reasons behind the antagonism with his Indian characters and motives for white settlers. Of course, simply rehashing long-established narrative traditions without inquiries and inquiries much exploration of Indian motives. Further, it has been noted that later in his career Ellis had interest in learning Ellis and his fellow dime novelists to imitate the exciting, "tried and true" storylines of popular frontier literature. Typically no motivations are assigned to Indian characters in Ellis's dime novels. Indeed, in a number of instances, Ellis implies the utter arbitrariness of Indian actions. In *THE MISSOURI RIVER*, for example, the white protagonist embarks on a trip along the Missouri River: "All along the banks...gathered crowds of wandering Indians who surveyed us. On two occasions, when halting to wood the crew were attacked by them, and one of their number was slain. At other points, they manifested a friendly disposition" (16). About the only consideration of Indian motives is noted in *THE MISSOURI RIVER* when the white protagonist remarks that the Indians are "not to be trusted" (16). In *THE MISSOURI RIVER*, the Indians are the basis for nearly all of the plots; frontiersman Tom Langdon remarks in *NATHAN TODD*, "I know them reds ar' desprit on cotchin' sich poor critters" (28).

"Indian nature" (believed to be a uniform, discrete entity by many Euramericans in the nineteenth century) is generally accepted by Ellis and fellow dime novelists as fully identified, entirely mapped out by previous writers; in addition to Ellis's obvious debts to Cooper, his characters frequently cite other writers as experts on the Indian. In *THE RIVAL SCOUTS*, he quotes from historian Francis Parkman in setting the scene of the story: "The Indians are to be regarded as an ideal source for information on 'the ways and manners of the Indians'" (62). In many of Ellis's dime novels there is a distinct awareness of chronicling past events whose conflicts have long since been resolved. He writes in *OONOMOO*, *THE HURON*, "profound peace and security never existed on the border until the final removal of the Indians beyond the Mississippi" (10). In *THE MISSOURI RIVER*, the perspective of the white protagonist is to distance the writer from the events he relates. With the removal of the Indians from the western portion of North America, as established by the 1860s, Ellis and his fellow dime novelists could mine the past for their adventure plots and virtually disregard the political and social debates, inevitable results of intercultural contact on the frontier of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which many of these earlier texts had incorporated.

Roger Nichols notes, "Dime novels tended to popularize existing views of Indians" (100, "The Dime Novel"). Nichols, a collector and editor of dime novels, writes: "The American dime novel is a [Native] American" (100); this observation adequately describes most of Ellis's early titles for Beadle. Yet there is a remarkable contrast between Ellis's unreflective depiction of relations between Americans and Native Americans in most

of his early dime novels and his depictions in the two which Ellis gave contemporary settings. *INDIAN JIM* and *THE HUNTER'S ESCAPE*, both published in 1864, are set in August, 1862, in the midst of what came to be known as the Great Sioux Uprising. While several aspects of these two novels closely resemble Ellis's other dime novels, there are several key differences. Whereas "Indian nature" and the prospects of Euramerican/Native American relations are generally taken for granted and therefore are not given much discussion in Ellis's other novels, in his two 1864 texts about the "Minnesota Massacre," these subjects become a matter of direct, prolonged focus, providing these novels an unusual contemporary social and political relevance absent in Ellis's other early work for Beadle.

The Great Sioux Uprising of 1862, in which over 350 whites were killed—the "largest Indian massacre of whites in the nation's history (Josephy 98)—was a topic of considerable controversy in 1864. The press of immigrants from the eastern United States and from Germany, Scandinavia, and Ireland into Minnesota, which had been granted official territorial status in 1849, greatly heightened the demand for land in the territory. In 1851, in return for about \$3,000,000, to be paid mostly in annuities, the Dakota Sioux were persuaded to sign a treaty in which they ceded "24 million acres, including their ancestral villages and hunting grounds, and [agreed to move] onto a narrow strip of land 20 miles wide and extending for 150 miles in a northwesterly direction along both sides of the Minnesota River" (101). Tensions grew between the Dakotas and white settlers of Minnesota when the federal government repeatedly delayed annuities and especially when traders were given much of the cash payments for what were in many cases fraudulent claims. In the early 1860s, shortly after Minnesota attained its statehood, the Dakotas became more and more desperate. Crop failures increased their dependence on federal food annuities. Throughout much of the summer of 1862, Indian Agent Major Thomas J. Galbraith withheld the dispersal of food though it was available in agency storehouses, claiming that he wanted to wait for cash to arrive from Washington in order to distribute cash and food at the same time. (Alvin Josephy speculates that Galbraith had hoped to reap personal profit by holding back this food (108).) On August 4, 1862, a group of Dakotas broke down the storehouse door at the Yellow Medicine Agency to take food, touching off a series of skirmishes between Dakotas and whites which Chief Little Crow soon organized into a general revolt of the Sioux against the whites in Minnesota.

Several Minnesota regiments that had been organized to fight in the Civil War were kept in Minnesota to put down the uprising. President Lincoln even created a Military Department of the Northwest and appointed as its head the newly replaced chief of the Union Army General John Pope. By the end of September, 1862, the Sioux revolt had been effectively ended and many white Minnesotans were clamoring for vengeance. A special military board created to determine which individual Sioux deserved punishment "sentenced 307 Indians and half breeds to be hanged" (Josephy 137). The national response to this recommendation was decidedly mixed. Many whites, especially those in the northwest, demanded that the sentences be carried out swiftly. Others advised more caution; Henry Whipple, Bishop of the Missionary District of Minnesota, appealed to Lincoln to review each of the verdicts. Though most of the names were taken off the condemned list, 38 Sioux were hanged in "America's largest public mass execution" (Josephy 138).

The Sioux uprising served to intensify Euramerican debate about treatment of Native Americans at a time when the United States was preoccupied with civil war; the Dakotas themselves, though, suffered immedi-

ately. "To help calm Minnesota's anti-Indian hysteria, Congress in February and March, 1863, voided all treaties with the...Dakota[s]...ending their reservation, all their claims...and ordering their removal from the state" (Josephy 138). Euramerican reaction to this treatment of the Dakotas was divided, with a good number of Eastern journalists sharply criticized federal policy. Even General Pope, who had led an offensive campaign against the Dakotas in 1863 and 1864, came to voice his disgust concerning the rampant corruption in the Office of Indian Affairs which he felt further threatened already strained relations between Euramericans and Native Americans.

Ellis's first novel about the Great Sioux Uprising was *INDIAN JIM: A TALE OF THE MINNESOTA MASSACRE*, published on April 1, 1864. As suggested earlier, the novel in some respects conforms to conventional dime novel assumptions about Indians; at one point, the converted Christian Indian Paul informs a party of besieged whites that "Injin after women folks" (65). Yet the novel also demonstrates an uncharacteristic self-consciousness in much of its portrayal of Native Americans. For paralleling the hostility between white settlers and the Sioux, Ellis develops an ideological conflict between eastern artist Adolphus Halleck, who holds highly romanticized notions about "the noble red man," and westerner Marion Allodale, who claims to have a more accurate understanding of "savage Indian nature." For example, consider the following exchange between Marion and Halleck early in the novel shortly after Halleck has arrived in Minnesota:

"You still retain your admiration for the savages?"

"Fully, I have admired them, ever since, when a boy, I pored over the enchanting pages of the *Leatherstocking Tales*; and I have longed to see them...where they are uncontaminated by contact with the white man."

"You will have abundant opportunity to witness the pure red man himself. But let me say, coz, that these poetical ideas of yours will disappear as rapidly as the snowflake upon the river." (10)

Halleck maintains throughout the initial parts of the novel "that the Indians, *as a race*, are high souled, brave, and chivalrous; above even ourselves, in such quantities" (11), and Marion frequently responds with such statements: "And I say they are a treacherous, merciless, repulsive people, who are no more fit to live than tigers" (11) (though she exempts from these charges the small number of Sioux who have been converted to Christianity).

Much of the first half of the novel revolves around Halleck's "education" about what his Minnesota relatives contend is the "true nature" of the Indian, Halleck again and again refuting his relatives with what he claims is his superior "understanding" of the "noble Indian" gleaned from such authors as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. When the uprising begins, Halleck consistently maintains that "These aggressors must be some of the offscourings and vagabonds of the tribes. The Indian himself is a noble creature" (46). When Halleck declares of the Sioux, "I don't believe they would have committed a single crime had they not been goaded to it by some great injustice" (72), the perhaps ironically-named Will Brainerd, a native of Minnesota, offers a review of the situation:

"It is true that they have been badly treated. From my own personal knowledge, I know that they have been swindled and abused by the traders and agents. When they demanded nothing but their simple rights, and what had been promised them, they were met with curses and kicks; and I know, too, of instances of starvation, when there were hundreds of dollars due

them. The causes of this great outbreak, beyond all question, are those same traders and agents. It is they who must answer for the whirlwind of death that is sweeping over the land. But can oppression, however great, excuse the massacre of innocent women and children?" (72) (Charles Bryant and Abel Murch use a similar argument in their 1864 (2nd ed) *A HISTORY OF GREAT MASSACRE BY THE SIOUX INDIANS IN MINNESOTA* (457-58).)

As if to support Brainerd's argument, Ellis goes on to offer details about this "whirlwind of death": "ghastly, swollen corpses of animals and men, disfigured by all manners of mutilation—infants torn limb from limb, and females so brutally torn and outraged, as to be too revolting for description" (80). Indeed, exposed to such "evidence," Halleck himself nearly becomes an Indian hater when a Sioux kills his fiancée Maggie Brainerd. The conventional dime novel plot of Indians besieging whites, threatening white women in particular, which pervades the second half of *INDIAN JIM*, does not allow Ellis to do much more than acknowledge that the Sioux had serious grievances that should have been rectified. However, the mere listing of the catalogue of Sioux complaints marks a significant difference in the portrayal of Indians compared to that of Ellis's other dime novels of the period. And the ultimate fate of Adolphus Halleck—who changes from "Indian lover" to "Indian hater" to Christian missionary in the final pages of the novel—presages the direction Ellis was to take in his next novel concerning the "Minnesota Massacre."

THE HUNTER'S ESCAPE: A TALE OF THE NORTHWEST IN 1862 was published on November 22, 1864. Like *INDIAN JIM*, this novel is set in August, 1862, but unlike its predecessor, *THE HUNTER'S ESCAPE* is set near the mission of Harvey Richter, some distance to the northwest of the settlements that were most affected by the Sioux uprising. Influenced in part perhaps by the Eastern press which strongly criticized the unfair treatment the Sioux had experienced in Minnesota since the arrival of Euramerican settlers, Ellis gives a more sympathetic hearing of the Dakotas' motives for revolt in this novel than in *INDIAN JIM*. Probably a more significant factor, however, is the particular features of the plot of *THE HUNTER'S ESCAPE*, which does not involve the slaughter of women and children that Will Brainerd had alluded to in the earlier novel. Indian characters pose a threat to white protagonists, but that threat is more diffuse, more abstract—we have no graphic descriptions of mutilations of whites. Consequently, the rehearsing of Sioux grievances carries more weight. For example, with no qualifications, Ellis informs the reader near the beginning of the novel:

The resistless march of civilization to the westward had been gradually and surely absorbing that portion of Minnesota which, *by right of treaty* belonged to the Indians. There had been murmurings and occasional threats of resistance to this *unscrupulous invasion*, which all saw would as effectively drive them from the country as if the army of the United States had marched against them. (19; emphasis mine)

Ellis even contends that the Sioux had been tricked into signing treaties by calculating federal agents who had made sure to intoxicate Indian delegations before crucial negotiations (20).

Richter, who has been preaching in the area for over forty years, begins the novel certain that none of the Indians whom he believes he has converted to Christianity will consider joining the uprising; the experienced hunter Roderick Charnly is more dubious about the intentions of this group of Sioux. These conflicting beliefs which Richter and Charnly initially hold concerning "Indian nature" in some ways parallel the debate

between Halleck and Marion Allondale in *INDIAN JIM*. However, the results of this debate is virtually reversed from the earlier novel. Charnly tells Richter, "These aborigines that are so lauded by sentimental poets and romance writers are a treacherous and bloody-minded race," and Richter replies, "They are a people who have been grievously wronged by the whites. What can you expect from them, when such wicked agents are appointed by the Government and when such dishonest traders grow rich from these poor, starving red-men?" (37). In fact, the ultimate villain in the novel is not an Indian but rather is Yankee whiskey trader Matt Larkins, who brags that he falsifies claims on Indian cash annuities and purposely gets Indians interested in liquor to boost his sales. (Ellis here seems to subscribe to the particular "fire-water myth" that all Indians are constitutionally addicted to alcohol.) Indeed, in a virtual role reversal from Halleck's change from "Indian lover" to "Indian hater," Charnly is eventually convinced that "Both parties are in fault, the Indians unquestionably have been wrongly used by Government agents and traders, and their suffering has goaded them to this outbreak" (74). Such an observation by the white protagonist—whom we later learn has been made an Indian agent—itself represents a marked contrast from the view of Native Americans in the majority of Ellis's dime novels. Native Americans are portrayed not as faceless "automata," a term Ellis uses in *THE RIFLEMAN OF THE MIAMI* (15), impelled by brute desires, but rather as a people who have justifiable complaints about their treatment by Euramericans. The conversion of Halleck to Christian missionary and the appointment of the "enlightened" Charnly as an Indian agent reflects Ellis's (and many contemporary Euramericans' optimism concerning the possibility of assimilating Native Americans into Euramerican society (however pernicious we may today judge the results to have been) which was to dominate official federal Indian policy throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century.

It is important to note that Ellis's relatively sympathetic, realistic characterizations of Indian motives in *INDIAN JIM* and *THE HUNTER'S ESCAPE* do not signal a radical evolution in Ellis's overall portrayals of Native Americans in his dime novels of the 1860s; subsequent Ellis dime novels that are again set in the already defined past, whose plots are suffused with the sense of historic completion, revert to the conventional assumptions about Indian motives—Indians want only to capture white women. Rather than any change in Ellis's own attitude towards Native Americans, it is the contemporary setting itself which prompts the relatively developed portrayals of Native Americans in Ellis's two novels about the Great Sioux Uprising. The novels overtly consider—in a more immediately politically relevant manner than even any of Cooper's frontier romances—crucial issues of the day. The Sioux Uprising had intensified national debate concerning Euramerican treatment of Native Americans; in writing of this event, Ellis could not simply rehash old storylines, but rather joined the contemporary debate itself, in fact incorporating it as part of his narrative, quite remarkable for a literary form often dismissed as merely derivative.

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OLD CREOLE DAYS, NEW ORLEANS NIGHTS

By J. Randolph Cox

In spite of the fact that some of us had been in New Orleans before, it was not really "deja vu all over again" as Yogi Berra once said. For one thing the weather was better this time than I remembered it having been in 1988. There was one day of rain, but otherwise the temperature varied only between cool and warm.

The occasion was the annual joint meeting of the Popular Culture Association and the American Culture Association and, as usual, there was a full program of eclectic pleasures with a liberal sprinkling of presentations on dime novels, pulps, and series books. It was time again to recharge my intellectual batteries by meeting with people who also cared about the eternal verities in life—dime novels, pulp magazines, and series books.

Once again I was able to attend the entire conference from Wednesday, April 7, to Saturday, the 10th, and still found it difficult to take in everything on the program as well as a sampling of the local cuisine and sights.

I arrived in the middle of the afternoon on Tuesday and found my way to the Marriott Hotel by airline shuttle. The hotel was on the edge of the French Quarter and the driver insisted on giving us a guided tour as well. The NCAA tournament having just ended there were signs of sports triumphs around in the many posters and advertisements. There was no difficulty in recognizing fellow conference attendees, even when they weren't clutching the familiar green program book. Bill Gowen and Jim Keeline were in the registration line at the hotel behind me and we were soon exchanging room numbers and plans for getting together later.

Eddie LeBlanc, with whom I was sharing a room, had already checked in. He and I shared appetizers and drinks in one of the hotel dining rooms with his daughter, Jacqueline, and two of her friends from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Amy Lee and Phoebe Jackson. Later we went to the French Quarter where we began our search for local cuisine in a second floor restaurant dining room overlooking the fabled streets of wrought iron balconies. In spite of the best efforts of our waiter to sell me a meal of something I had never tasted before I was relatively conservative and that probably accounts for my not being able to remember what I had...except for the "suicide chocolate dessert" and the rum fruit punch.

The game of playing "who's here now?" began in earnest when we checked our hotel room answering machine afterwards and found a message from Al Tonik who was staying at the LaSalle. The next morning we continued to find people who had just arrived or had tidings of someone who would be arriving soon. It all came in such a rush that I have no memory of who arrived when, except for the embarrassment of realizing Didi Johnson had been standing in the group where I was for some time before I was aware she was there. She had brought the cold I had had in Louisville (and which I didn't catch again until I had been back in Northfield, MN, for several days), but was otherwise able to enjoy the festivities.

Eddie and I attended the M. R. James panel at 8:30 Wednesday where we discovered that, with the exception of the moderator's wife, we were the entire audience! There was a larger crowd at the next session we attended: Television Talk Shows. Eddie's daughter and her friends were among the four presenters and it was one of the more smoothly run panels I saw during the four days.

For some reason, Wednesday afternoon is a blur in my memory, not

totally due to deciding it was time to go up to the room and lie down at one point. I do remember meeting several of the other members of our Area, Lydia Schurman, Jim Evans, Al Tonik, Didi, and the Chamberlains. This was Kathleen's first year as Area Chair, but that didn't prevent her from escaping the hotel in search of used book stores. Rob was present to read his paper on Graham Watkins's horror fiction in a panel he shared with two presentations on Stephen King. For some reason I am only able to remember Rob's paper.

There was the usual good talk about books and projects in our room after the evening meal and after our hearing had been restored following the Blues/Zydeco Music Jam Session in the Grand Ballroom at 6:00.

In the morning we tended to go our separate ways, meeting again during the coffee breaks on the second floor outside the Exhibition area and across from the conference registration desk. Eddie and I stopped in to hear a session on adapting mysteries from book to film, but while I stayed until the end (and the final presentation on the point of view of Dr. Watson in the Granada TV Sherlock Holmes series), Eddie slipped off to pursue other interests.

The rest of Thursday also went like a blur, but I did pick up a few papers along the way, some by people who had been unable to attend due to funding cuts at their institutions. This was an often heard reason given for people who were listed in the program not being able to attend.

For the first time since Toronto in 1984, the Dime Novel sessions were not all on the same day. The first panel devoted to our topics was from 12:30 to 2:00 on Thursday. It was "Popular Boys' Series" chaired by Henri Achée. The three presentations began with "The Rover Boys at School Again...and Again...and Again," by Rocco Musemeche, in which "three sets of Rover Boys negotiate the miles to their respective seats of learning, a trio of sites within the range of frolic, derring-do, and turn-of-the-century atmosphere." The next paper was by John Musemeche, "Don Sturdy—Did He Ever Stay at Home?" which "studied Don Sturdy who used everything from camel to whaling ship to find improbable adventure everywhere but Disneyland." The final paper, "Mysteries Most Young: Sam Epstein's Roger Baxter series," by Henri Achée. To quote the abstract for our own version of the program: "Blending postwar social and political issues with the traditional juvenile mystery, the Roger Baxter series allowed Sam Epstein to perfect those mystery-writing skills that made his next series, the acclaimed Ken Holt series, a success. This paper discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the series and its impact on the Ken Holt books."

I can't speak for everyone in our group, but I spent the afternoon at panels with as diverse subjects as detective fiction and Star Trek and came away filled with ideas and enthusiasm.

Friday was the day for panels on westerns and comic books (and even western comic books) and some of it will turn out to have been grist for the mill in my work on dime novels since I seem to have a knack for finding relationships between the most diverse subjects and types of publications.

Saturday was the day we had scheduled the rest of our sessions on dime novels, pulps, and series books. We had some of our best sessions in the past decade and all were well attended. To some extent we have been creating our own audience for our topics, but that is certainly a legitimate pursuit.

The first session (when our eyes were barely open after a late night discussion of the topics) was "The Call of the Wild West." In "The Pulp Career of Robert G. Harris," Albert Tonik described an interview he had with one of the more prolific cover artists of the pulps and illustrated

this with slides of many of Harris's covers for westerns and Doc Savage. Randall C. Davis's topic was "Edward S. Ellis and the Minnesota Massacre" [see pages 72-78 of this issue]. To quote the abstract for his paper: "Though most of the Indians in Ellis's 1864 novel INDIAN JIM follow the conventional 'savage' stereotype, Ellis includes an ideological debate between an Easterner's romanticized view of the 'noble red man' and a Westerner's insistence on Indians' 'savage' nature. This paper examines the implications of this debate and explores possible reasons for INDIAN JIM'S self-reflexive depiction of American Indians."

The final paper was "Prentis Ingraham's Dime Novels About Buck Taylor," by Jim Evans. Again, to quote the abstract: "Buck Taylor, a Texas-born cowboy skilled at riding broncos and using a lariat, gained fame and popularity during his seasons as King of the Cowboys with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. Shortly after Buck's years as a showman, Prentis Ingraham, a prolific dime novelist who had himself been a Texas scout, used Buck as the topic of six dime novels in the Beadle series. These dime novels deal with Buck's early life as a scout in southern Texas where he aided settlers during raids by Mexican bandits and Indian savages. This paper presents an account of these dime novels."

The next session was "Race and Class in Juvenile Series Books." I quote the abstracts of the three papers which I didn't hear since I left to hear a paper on Sherlock Holmes given in another session. Unfortunately, the panel had been rearranged and the paper came last on the schedule so I couldn't hear the series book panel at all.

"Family, Food, and Fun: The Idyllic World of the Stratemeyer Syndicate's 'Tot' Series," by Deidre Johnson was the first paper. It examined the near-perfect environment that Stratemeyer Syndicate 'tots' series create for their protagonist: supportive families, ample material goods, continual travel and adventure. The richness of the protagonists' lives is subtly emphasized through contrasts with less-fortunate children outside the protagonists' protected circle." This was followed by "White Supremacy in Juvenile Series Books," by H. Alan Pickrell, which presented "a review of the concept of White Supremacy as depicted in series published before 1960 for older children and adolescents. These models not only reflected contemporary cultural attitudes, but also helped to perpetuate them."

The final paper was Kathleen Chamberlain's "The Isabel Carlton Series—A manual for the Middle Class." "Written by Margaret Ashmun from 1916 to 1920, the five volume Isabel Carlton series presents a pre-World War I heroine who struggles to define herself and her place in the world. In her careful delineation of the manners and morals of Isabel's society, Ashmun provides both a handbook for contemporary aspirants to the middle class and a detailed record of the class ideology that informed the early decades of the twentieth century."

The panel that followed a hasty lunch at the Wendy's next door to the Marriott Hotel was called "Questions of Bibliography and Authorship." The first two panelists were Eddie LeBlanc and Lydia Schurman who spoke about different aspects of the work being done on their bibliography of dime novels. In Eddie's part he described the scope, the content, and the history of the LeBlanc Dime Novel Bibliography. Lydia examined the technical aspects of preparing the bibliography and offered tips on electronic publishing. My presentation, "A Syndicate of Rascals: The Men Behind Nick Carter," discussed the relative merits of the early New York Weekly Nick Carter serials, by John Coryell, Frederic Van Rensselaer Dey, and Frederick W. Davis. It achieved the dubious accolade (attested to by Jack Dizer's watch) of running overtime by 14 minutes and 5 seconds!

The final panel, "Issues of Structure and Content," began with Troy Holaday's "The Reader Headlock on Science Fiction/Fantasy Serial Writing," which examined "the problematic effects on both author and work produced by the author/reader dialectic and further explored how these elements influenced and continue to influence the construction and reconstruction of the genre." This was followed by Bill Gowen's "Ralph Henry Barbour: Boys' Books and Much More," which brought Barbour's books to life in both the text of Bill's paper and his dazzling show of slides illustrating how attractive a set of that author's works could be.

Jack Dizer finished the program with a paper on "The Unknown Percy Keese Fitzhugh," those sixteen works which are less well-known than the Tom Slades, Roy Blakelys, Pee Wee HARRISES and Westy Martins. Jack cited some disturbing elements of racial and ethnic bigotry found in Fitzhugh's work and illustrated the prolific nature of his output with slides.

As usual our group met for half an hour or so afterwards to discuss our part in the conference, to plan for the Syracuse Summer Symposium, and for next year's PCA in Chicago. A celebratory dinner at the Gumbo Shop on St. Peter Street in the French Quarter and the obligatory walk down Bourbon Street rounded off the evening, although some of us spent much of Easter Sunday in post conference discussion and celebration. And so, once again, we recharged our intellectual batteries by talking about the eternal verities in life—dime novels, pulp magazines, and series books.

Anyone interested in attending the Syracuse Symposium, August 5-6, 1993, should write Carolyn A. Davis, Special Collections Dept., E. S. Bird Library, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY 13244-2010.

Anyone interested in presenting a paper at PCA in Chicago next April 6-9, write Kathleen Chamberlain, Box 116, Emory, VA 24327.

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